



Testimony to the Aging Committee

Presented by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

March 3, 2015

Regarding

- SB 1002, An Act Concerning Senior Centers
- SB 1003, An Act Concerning Nursing Home Care
- SB 1004, An Act Concerning Senior Housing
- SB 1005, An Act Protecting Elderly Persons from Exploitation
- HB 6893, An Act Increasing the Personal Needs Allowance for Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities
- HB 6894, An Act Concerning a Study of Long-Term Care
- HB 6895, An Act Requiring the State Ombudsman to Investigate Complaints Concerning Recipients of Home and Community-Based Care

Good morning Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, and members of the Aging Committee. On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut, a membership organization representing mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of long term care, services and supports and including senior housing, I would like to submit the following testimony on several of the bills that are before you today and offer the Committee our assistance as you consider these various issues.

SB 1002, An Act Concerning Senior Centers

LeadingAge Connecticut has no objection to this proposed bill and would be happy to assist the Committee with such a study.

SB 1003, An Act Concerning Nursing Home Care

LeadingAge Connecticut has no objection to this proposed bill and would be happy to assist the Committee with such a study.

SB 1004, An Act Concerning Senior Housing

LeadingAge Connecticut is a strong proponent of the model of linking affordable senior housing with long term services and supports; a model that enables older adults to remain in the community and to age in place. We believe this model is one of the answers to our state's quest to balance the system of long term services and supports. Our membership includes several affordable senior housing sites and we are pleased to comment on the bill before you today.

Affordable housing should be available to all those who need it and as a state we should strive to meet that need. There is currently a growing need for affordable housing with long term services and supports both for older adults and for persons with disabilities. LeadingAge Connecticut supports the

study outlined in section one of this bill before you today. We would encourage including the Commissioners of the Department of Social Services, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the State Department on Aging in the study as their respective departments oversee many of the services provided to older and younger adults in affordable housing.

SB 1005, An Act Protecting Elderly Persons from Exploitation

Prevention of elder abuse is a priority for LeadingAge Connecticut members and we therefore support the intent of this proposed bill which is to extend the current statutory reporting requirements and protective services for elder abuse to include the financial exploitation of older adults. We believe expanding the statutory protective services could be beneficial to many individuals and we applaud the Committee for moving forward in this direction.

As the representative of aging service providers, we would be very interested in being included in the further development of this proposal. We do have questions regarding some of the new and amended definitions contained in the bill. For instance, in the definition of a "person who stands in a position of trust and confidence," in line 36 we question whether the intent was to place an "and" instead of an "or" between (A) and (B). We also note that the definition of "neglect" now varies from its use in other similar statutes and we ask if the definition of "caretaker" should be clarified.

HB 6893, An Act Increasing the Personal Needs Allowance for Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities

LeadingAge Connecticut supports the effort to increase the personal needs allowance for nursing home residents. An increase in the allowance can enhance the personal experience and quality of life for a nursing home resident. Related to this bill, we are very concerned that the Governor's budget proposal calls for a \$10 reduction in the monthly allowance. We have opposed that proposed cut.

HB 6894, An Act Concerning a Study of Long-Term Care

LeadingAge Connecticut has no objection to this proposed bill and would be happy to assist the Committee with such a study.

HB 6895, An Act Requiring the State Ombudsman to Investigate Complaints Concerning Recipients of Home and Community-Based Care

There is already a pilot community long term care ombudsman program in statute that is intended to be implemented in the Hartford area. This pilot has not yet been launched and is the target of a proposed cut in the Governor's budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony and we offer the Committee our assistance on any of these issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Mag Morelli, President



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